



Date of Council Meeting: January 12, 2015

**TOWN OF LEESBURG
TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**

Subject: Status of Loudoun County Courts Phase III Expansion Project application and Edwards Ferry Road Houses

Staff Contact: Scott E. Parker, Assistant Town Manager

This informational memorandum outlines the current status of the Loudoun County Courts Phase III expansion project, including the current disposition of the four houses on Edwards Ferry Road currently under review at the Board of Architectural Review (BAR).

Town staff is expecting a rezoning and concept plan amendment application for the project soon. It is anticipated that the application will include both the expanded court facility at the corner of Edwards Ferry Road and Church Street (old jail site), as well as a new parking structure at the Pennington Lot. County staff has informed us that the Pennington site will be developed first in order to provide parking as the balance of the work on the new facilities commences.

The design team for the project, comprised of Dewberry Architects Inc. and County staff from the Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure, with Board of Supervisors' direction, has chosen a design alternative for the new courts building that requires the demolition of four houses on Edwards Ferry Road, all of which are contributing historic buildings in the Leesburg Old & Historic District. It should be noted that there were four alternatives for the new courts building presented by the design team during a series of public meetings. None of which proposed saving the houses as part of the concept.

As part of the application process, the design team has submitted four "Certificate of Appropriateness" applications (TLHP-2013-0115, 0116, 0117 and 0118) and is currently before the BAR for review of the proposed demolition of the four houses initiated at its meeting of December 15, 2014. Staff from the Town of Leesburg has presented a summary to the BAR outlining the demolition review process, as well as establishing the architectural and historical significance of the four houses, and providing initial comments on the impact and appearance of the new courts building. As such, Town staff has requested additional information from the applicants and has communicated several concerns, but has not yet provided a formal recommendation for the requests for demolition.

During its initial deliberations, the BAR expressed concern that the design team had not provided enough information to justify the demolition of the houses, citing that preservation of one or more of the houses was never considered as an alternative to demolition and that further exploration was needed. Other alternatives, such as the re-

use of salvaged materials, relocation of the houses, and other types of preservation methods, should be considered as well.

Beginning February 2, 2015, the BAR will begin holding a series of work sessions on this topic. In the meantime, the design team will be going back to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting of January 21, 2015, in order to provide the BOS with an update and to potentially receive direction as to whether or not a re-design that incorporates the houses, or other methods, should be considered. The Chair of the BAR has stated that he will do what is necessary to provide for additional meetings to accommodate a timely review of this application.

In addition, there will be two on-site tours of the houses conducted by the design team on January 14th and 16th respectively, with a starting time for each of 3:30 pm. The tours will be advertised as a special meeting for the BAR, and we anticipate noticing the meeting as a potential gathering of the Town Council as well.

Attachment: None